

What is Gene Therapy?

Human gene therapy seeks to modify or manipulate the expression of a gene or to alter the biological properties of living cells for therapeutic use 1.

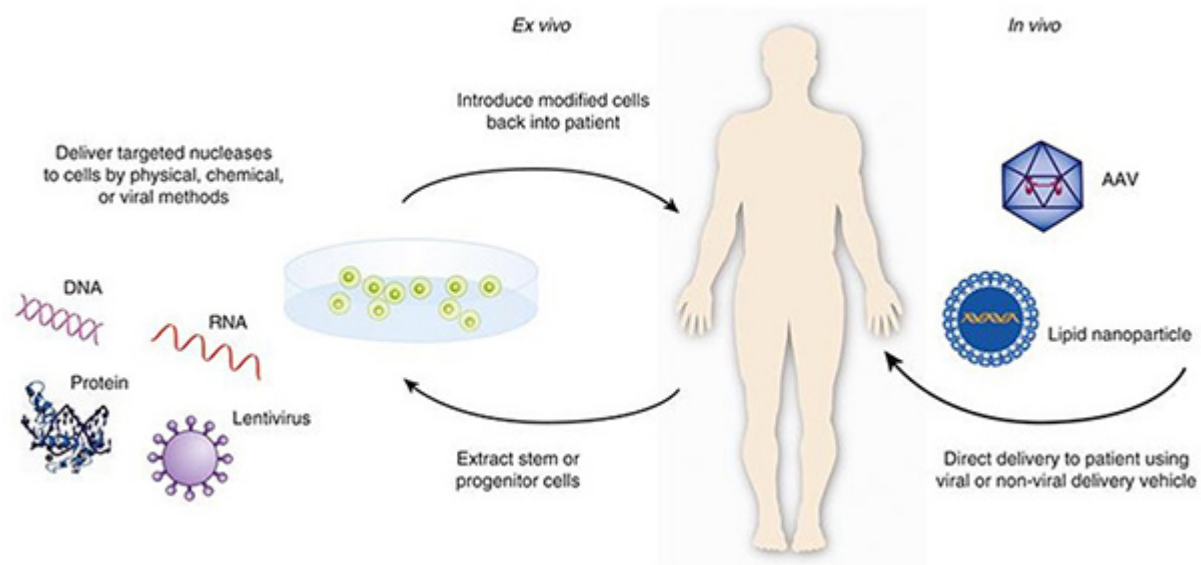
Gene therapy is a technique that modifies a person's genes to treat or cure disease. Gene therapies can work by several mechanisms:

- Replacing a disease-causing gene with a healthy copy of the gene
- Inactivating a disease-causing gene that is not functioning properly
- Introducing a new or modified gene into the body to help treat a disease

Gene therapy products are being studied to treat diseases including cancer, genetic diseases, and infectious diseases.

There are a variety of types of gene therapy products, including:

- **Plasmid DNA:** Circular DNA molecules can be genetically engineered to carry therapeutic genes into human cells.
- **Viral vectors:** Viruses have a natural ability to deliver genetic material into cells, and therefore some gene therapy products are derived from viruses. Once viruses have been modified to remove their ability to cause infectious disease, these modified viruses can be used as vectors (vehicles) to carry therapeutic genes into human cells.
- **Bacterial vectors:** Bacteria can be modified to prevent them from causing infectious disease and then used as vectors (vehicles) to carry therapeutic genes into human tissues.
- **Human gene editing technology:** The goals of gene editing are to disrupt harmful genes or to repair mutated genes.
- **Patient-derived cellular gene therapy products:** Cells are removed from the patient, genetically modified (often using a viral vector) and then returned to the patient.



Gene therapy products are biological products regulated by the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research (CBER). Clinical studies in humans require the submission of an investigational new drug application (IND) prior to initiating clinical studies in the United States. Marketing a gene therapy product requires submission and approval of a biologics license application (BLA).

[1 Long Term Follow-Up After Administration of Human Gene Therapy Products; Guidance for Industry, January 2020 \(/media/113768/download\)](#)